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Take the Wraps Off the CIA

Allen W. Dulles, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, believes the Russians are pushing ahead at the business of gathering information in the United States and at subverting Americans. At least he has no evidence to the contrary, although he says while the Russians are experts at gathering information they are unable to interpret it and thus do not make full use of their findings. The reason for that is that those interpreting the intelligence do not know enough about other countries to understand the information they receive.

The Russian reaction to some American acts have on occasion been the opposite of what was expected indicating not only lack of understanding but also fear and suspicion resulting from such misunderstanding. While such facts appear to support the CIA chief's interpretation, it also suggests the great difficulty of getting along with a nation that is continually hopped up over information it has received and failed to understand.

On the other hand Dulles suggests that our intelligence gathering has fallen off somewhat. Gathering information in Russia now is more difficult than it was in Germany during World War II because, Dulles says, "during time of war all inhibitions are off and you go hell bent to get any intelligence you can. You have to be a little more discreet and a little more careful in times of peace."

That sounds as if someone has Dulles working under wraps. If that is so, it is regrettable for it is just as important to "go hell bent" for information to prevent a war as to win a war. What could be more important than intelligence now when we are all living under the threat of an atomic attack? If the Central Intelligence Agency is working with one hand tied in the vain hope of pleasing the Russians, we are foolish beyond description. We should not only match Russian intelligence, we should exceed it both in gathering and in interpreting information.